1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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County Clare

In the past century (And in isolated regions still) most of
the clothing of the small farmers was made at home by the 294
women. Now, however, it is nearly all shop-bought. Certain 461
vestiges of the former practice remain, however, in knitting 476
sweaters, gloves, socks, and scarfs; and in the country dis- 178
tricts, at least of West and North Clare, there is a custom
which demands that some woman of the house be always at
work. If there is no other task on hand, they must occupy
themselves with knitting. In former days, the daughters of
the community might gather in a *meitheal*, or coöperative
work group, under the supervision of older women for card-
ing and spinning flax and wool. In any event, the younger
woman, the girl, is at the older woman's command.

Much the same content of emotion and sentiment exists 593
in this relationship, subordinate as the daughter must re-
main, as in the case of the boy. But in the case of the daugh-
ter there is never a readjustment, and there is never a period
of community of interest with the father. Nor need the
mother fear a competition with an impatient oncoming suc-
cessor as must the farm father who knows he cannot put off
forever his relinquishing his farm to his son. For, eagerly
as the daughter may look forward to her own marriage, she
knows that marriage will bring in a rivalry over household
control with a totally new person in an entirely new scene.
It is her husband's mother, not her own, to whom new ad-
justments must be made. The implication of this fact, and
the struggle it entails, will bear examination in the discussion
of marriage.

Still another relationship exists within the household un-
der normal circumstances. The relationship of brother to
sister has its reflection in farm work. But it is a relationship
with a different history from the relationship between sib-
lings of similar sex. Sexual differences in behavior have
made a different habit, beginning very early in the child's
experience. And, for each of them, the sexual differences
are colored a great deal by the norms which mark the rela-

 463

at least of those of the better recognized trades, are direct 467
and intimate. The following words illustrate something of 874
the character of apprenticeship. A small farmer is speaking
of his own knowledge of local conditions:

Before the war there used to be about twenty shoemakers in 463
the neighborhood, but now they've mostly gone away or are in 467
the towns. One of them went into Ennistymon. Whenever a
farmer wants a strong pair of boots even yet, he will not go to 874
a shop but he would go to the shoemaker. It wasn't always the 294
case the son of a shoemaker would follow the trade because
there was good money in it. With it they would buy a farm
and so for his sons, and they would go to farming. If a farmer
had a crippled son, he might send him to the shoemaker to
teach him the trade. Papers were signed that bound the boy
for three years to the tradesman, and then the boy would go
live with the shoemaker. At first he would be taught to tap,
then to stick, then to sew, and the last thing would be to cut.
If a boy left before the three years were up, no one would give
him a job, and no other tradesman would take him on to teach
him a trade. The father had to give twenty pounds to twenty-
five pounds to teach him. At the end of three years the boy
was given his indenture papers which meant he could set him-
self up any place in the country or, if he had not enough money
to do that, he would work as a journeyman for someone else
and his papers would give him the right to do it.

There were a great many tailors and smiths too. The time
of work was three years. A boy who was a cripple might be
sent to tailoring. He was taught three years and then he could
set himself up. It was the easiest of them all to get along with
because it required no money to start with. In the old days the
tailor used to come to the house and stay for a week or so and
make clothes for all the men of the house and go to the next
house after.

The smiths trained boys also. When I was small, a cousin of 463
mine had a forge below on the road and any wet day all the 874
boys used to gather there and watch and talk. I started out by
blowing the bellows and then doing other things until finally 326
I was as good as anyone. If I had the material I could make
shoes, and I always shoe my own horses.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

463 Of these local specialists only the smith survives in any
326 strength today. He shares with the mason the admiration
554 the country people feel for physical strength and prowess. Perhaps it is this that made the more sedentary occupations of weaver, shoemaker, and tailor of less prestige. Thus the crippled son, as the quotation says, might be put to one of them.

463 The tailor was often a peripatetic. He moved around
294 from house to house and community to community where he was known, living and eating among the family. He was made welcome, not only as a maker of clothes but also as a carrier of gossip. Today the few tailors who survive in the country districts are petty cotters with only a memory of their trade. The few still active ones have retreated to the towns. Most of the farmers' clothing is now shop-bought and factory-made.

463 The weaver was perhaps the most sedentary of the local
286 craftsmen. He is the one who has failed to survive even
[283] in the towns. The women of the farm families carded and spun the wool into yarn until home spinning died out, and broke and scutched the flax for linen, but the weaver made it into cloth. He spent all his days indoors, moving from one side of his loom to the other in a small room heavy-laden with fluff and lint. The farmers seem to remember most strongly the unhealthiness of the life, but they tell one also of the weavers' arrogance when their skill was in great demand. The following is the kind of description one can still get, the first part of it discoursing on weavers in general and the second relating the history of the local man:

> In the old days the weaver might have enough work to keep him busy for four months and, when you went to see him, he would put you off and tell you to come back in a fortnight for your goods. It would be no good for you, none in the world, if you didn't take a bowl of butter and a few dozen eggs to him

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 Windows, as well as chimneys, were taxed, hence the oldfashioned blind [65] wall and the old fireplace (without chimney) being preserved. The daylight was admitted to the kitchen by the door opening. A pad of straw was placed at the door, *sop i mbéal dorais* (Dinneen) on which tailors and other crafts- ● [294] men used to sit to avoid window-tax. When windows came later on, they were placed on the side of the house sheltered from the prevailing wind.

The gables. The stone built gables are higher or lower according to the form of the roof, which is determined by the wind. In some districts of Ireland [184] especially in the Aran Islands, Connemara, Sligo, Mayo there are often even in very primitive buildings, step gables or serrated gables. In other parts of Ireland the gables are straight up to the top. In Southern and Eastern Ireland the gables are generally of this type. Half thatched or hipped gables are sometimes found in the east, where now and then the thatch is also bent over the gable edge in the same way as in Wales. This is common on mud houses.

How the gables protect the ends of the thatched roof and support the horizontal ribs is shown in pl. XLIV: 2.

The roof. Roof and wall constructions meet one another in the most primitive stages, when the house is only a roof over a foundation wall, of a cavity, or when the roof is constructed similarly to the *clochán*s with the upper course of stones slightly overlapping the lower course. This construction is not known among dwelling houses of to-day, but can be found in outhouses, sweating buths etc.

Roofs made by wide slates or stone flags will be seen in some parts of Ireland when there is a natural access to stones suitable for slates as in Co. Clare where such roofs are found on outhouses with the narrow stone walls carrying the flags.

The Irish house from olden times generally has had not a stone roof, but a thatched roof, *ceann tuighe*. The art of making good thatched roofs is now dying out but in earlier times Irishmen had developed great skill in roofing with thatch.

The thatched roof is supported internally by beams joined in pairs forming [804] the couples, *cúplaí*. The couples are placed at a certain distance and the space enclosed between two couples must be looked upon as a sort of architectural unit. The length of the house can be measured by the number of couples. [171] A very similar kind of measuring is well known in Denmark and Skåne. In many old houses the length of the house seems to indicate traditions from the ancient Irish laws (See Addy, p. 84).

The roof-supporting system of beams varies very little. The beams can

In Tuosist the reason given to me by my father and some other old people was that ill-luck would fall upon Kerry and especially on the parish of Tuosist, if the Corkmen succeeded in forcing the coffin across Leac na gCorp and laid it down on Kerry soil. Sickness, bad crops, and misfortunes of many kinds would follow the corpse, if it were laid beyond the boundary-stone. This is undoubtedly the original reason for the defence of the border on funeral days. A corpse has in many lands for long been regarded as having evil magical power (known scientifically as *orenda* or *mana*) of an impersonal kind latent in itself. In Ireland, for example, fishermen regarded it as unlucky to take the corpse of a drowned person into a boat. Also, *an féar gorta* ("the hungry grass"), which grew wherever a corpse touched the earth, had the power of causing all those who walked over the spot to be stricken with abnormal hunger. Many other instances of the evil power of a corpse might be cited. Just two hundred years ago, Morty Óg O'Sullivan, a native chieftain of Béara in West Cork, who had fought against the British both in Ireland and in many European countries as a member of the "Wild Geese", was slain outside his own house near Eyeries in Béara. The British took his body to a warship at Bere Island and dragged it through the sea in the wake of the ship about sixty miles to Cork. A poet who described this happening wrote the couplet:

Ní raibh aon rath ar an uisce ó Chorcaigh go Béara
Ó tairngeadh tríd an bradán gléigeal.[1]

No fish were said to have since been caught in the sea-route through which the corpse was dragged.

In Sweden, Miss Louise Hagberg tells us, if a corpse were carried over cultivated ground or over lakes, they became thereby unfruitful, and crop-growing fields lost their vegetation. She also says that during the Middle Ages those persons over whose lands a corpse was carried unlawfully had the right to compensation; in Västergötland anybody who carried a corpse across the land of another, without the permission of the owner, rendered himself liable to a prescribed fine.

Thus, the funeral-boundary customs in the Cork-Kerry area, which have died out only in comparatively recent times, seem to fit into the wider pattern of custom and superstition devised to give protection against the magical evil power associated with corpses.

2. Wearing Clothes for the Dead

In the year 1918 or so, an uncle of mine died in the townland of Fehanagh, in the parish of Tuosist, in southwest Kerry. This is my native parish. Jerry Sullivan was my uncle's name; he died at the age of sixty-four. I was fifteen years old at the time, and was spending some weeks of my summer holidays at my uncle's when he became ill and died. I was allowed to remain in the house during the illness, wake, and funeral.

It is still the immemorial custom in that parish to get a suit of clothes specially made by a local tailor when a person dies. The suit is not worn by the corpse in the coffin. Still, it is intended

[1] There has been no luck on the water from Cork to Béara
Since the gleaming salmon was dragged through it.

764 294 292 specifically for the dead person; I will describe in a moment the use to which it is put. Even though the dead person had a new suit of clothes at the time of his death, which he had never worn, but which he had ordered and got made for himself, this suit will not serve the purpose I mention, after his death. Still another new suit must be ordered immediately the person dies, and must be ready for wear on the Sunday following his death. There are certain rules which are *de rigeur* as far as the suit is concerned: (a) it must not be made to measure—the tailor would know most of the people of the parish and would have made clothes for many of them from time to time; when, therefore, a suit is ordered by the relatives of the man who has died, the tailor knows fairly well what the measurements of the deceased were, and makes the suit accordingly; (b) the material used in making the suit must be of good quality—otherwise the dead man will not be properly clad in the next world; (c) the suit must be complete in every detail; (d) it must not be tried on to see if it fits. Stories about events which followed a disregard for these rules will be referred to later.

764 292 When the clothes for my deceased uncle reached the house from the tailor on the Saturday evening after the burial, an interesting ritual was carried out, according to local custom. I remember the evening quite well; it was a very fine summer, and the mountains all around the valley were bathed by the rays of the setting sun. A neighbouring woman, named Mrs. Healy, who lived next door, came to the house of my late uncle at dusk, and asked his wife, children, and myself, to leave. We went some distance away from the house into a field. I heard afterwards from my aunt and from her children that Mrs. Healy then carried out the following rites: She was alone in the house, as I have said, and she first laid out the clothes, garment by garment, on the back of a kitchen chair, which was in the middle of the floor; the underclothes were on top of the pile of clothes, then came the shirt, then the trousers, then the waistcoat, then the coat, then the socks and shoes, and finally the hat and walking-stick underneath. Having thus arranged them, she then called on my deceased uncle three times by name, using the following words: "Here are your clothes, Jerry Sullivan! Come for them, and may you wear them in the next world as they will be worn for you in this!" She then sat down by the fire for short time. She then arose, took the chair and the garments to the threshold of the kitchen, leading to the yard, and repeated the same call and words three times. Having sat at the fireside again for a while, she took the chair and clothes out into the yard, again called three times on the dead man, and returned to the house alone, closing the door behind her. Having allowed some little time to elapse, she went out into the yard, brought the chair and clothes into the kitchen, and put them as they were, in the room at the bottom of the kitchen until next morning.

When she had finished her task, which occupied about a half-hour, as far as I can remember, she called us back to the house, and we all had our evening meal, as if nothing unusual had happened.

Early next morning, at the dawn of day, before anyone else in the house was up, my cousin, the dead man's son, arose, and Mrs. Healy again arrived to complete her task. My cousin went out through the kitchen door, turned round, and knelt on the threshold. Mrs. Healy then placed the suit, still arranged on the chair, inside the open door. My cousin then asked her for each garment in turn, in the name of the dead person, and she handed them to him as he asked for them.

were not new, but had, in fact, been made by the shoemaker himself for the dead man, who had worn them only once before his death. The dead man's wife had apparently thought that it was not necessary to order a new pair of boots to be made. The shoemaker had, however, promised the dead man to have the matter set right, so he quietly sent a message to the dead man's wife next day about his dream. She immediately ordered a new pair of shoes to be procured, and these were worn at Mass, along with the rest of the outfit, until the traditional rule had been fully observed.

A friend of mine in the parish of Clanlawrence in County Cork told me the following story to illustrate how carefully the details of the practice must be observed. A woman in that parish had a son who died. She got a new suit made for him, to be worn at Mass on the three Sundays after his burial, and on the Saturday evening prior to the first Sunday she laid the suit (as Mrs. Healy had done when my uncle had died) on the back of a chair in the kitchen, sprinkled it with holy water, and called on the dead son to come for them. Having next placed them at the threshold of the kitchen, she finally left them for a short while in the yard, and sat by the fire for a moment, presumably to allow the dead son to come for the suit. Suddenly she heard something being thrown against the door and, on investigating, she found that it was the new waistcoat. She then remembered that she had deliberately refrained from putting her dead son's watch in the pocket, intending to keep it as a memento. Needless to say, she immediately put the watch in the waistcoat pocket and replaced the garment on the chair in the yard. There was no further disturbance.[1]

[1] For general references to the custom mentioned in 1, see: När Döden Gästar, Louise Hagberg, Stockholm, 1937, pp. 331–379. Also, Über Krankheit, Tod und Jenseitsvorstellungen in Irland, Hans Hartmann, Halle, 1942, pp. 11–115; and Der Totenkult in Irland, by the same author, Heidelberg, 1952, pp. 15–17, 183.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

The spinning-wheel and hand-loom are the same as those commonly used on the west coast, the former, as usual, having no treadle. 172 [283]

Querns are still in use, and in connection with them the boran, or sieve of sheepskin stretched over a wicker frame, used for screening the meal. [252] [412]

Grain is still winnowed by shaking it in a sieve in a strong wind. [243]

The method of washing clothes is the same as that customary in Connemara, the clothes being folded, laid in the water of a lake or pool, and beaten with a club or paddle. [296]

The tailor, when making clothes, does not measure his customers with a tape, but takes all his measurements on one sheet of paper, marking the lengths by cutting notches out of the edge. [294]

The curraghs, which are still in use, are of the usual form; they are rapidly going out of fashion, however. [501]

The anchor used for small boats is a stone, not fixed in a wooden clamp, as in Clare and Aran, but having a groove around it for the rope.

As mentioned previously, the apparatus used for the shark-fishing is very rude and primitive.

2. *Antiquities.*— Inishbofin is not very rich in architectural antiquities, and the few that still remain are being rapidly destroyed; some ruins which were standing in the first half of the present century have altogether disappeared, and the others are much shattered. 172

In Inishshark, also, the buildings have sustained a great injury.

It does not lie within my province to enter upon any detailed description of the ruins; but I desire, in the following notes (extracted almost *verbatim* from my Field Note-book), to direct the attention of archæologists to the buildings of interest in these islands which are being rapidly blotted out of existence. The number and nature of these have been described by the late Mr. O'Donovan, Mr. Hardiman, Mr. G. H. Kinahan, and others.

In the account of their present condition given below, they are arranged in the order in which they are described by Mr. Hardiman.[1]

Inishbofin.—(1). St. Colman's church, in Knock townland, built in A.D. 667, is in a very ruinous state, and the interior is filled with rough gravestones and weeds, and in a small recess near the east window is a pile of crania and broken bones. In the enclosure around the church the foundations of the cells (cloghans (?)) of the abbey, or monastic colony, may still be traced, though with difficulty, but the

[1] "Hy-Iar Connaught," p. 116, footnote.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

tudes and practices; for the islanders do not wish to jeopardize unemployment assistance and old age benefits, nor to be taxed in the future, and thus closely guard sources and amounts of income, even from relatives and friends.

Division of Labor

The division of labor between the sexes is more dichotomous today than it was at the turn of the century, when there was an extensive sharing of the same tasks by men and women. The latter now restrict their economic activities to the home, for the most part, especially if they must care for infants and young children. As soon as children can speak and walk, they help their mothers perform household chores and run errands, such as carrying messages and procuring groceries in the shops. But at age seven, following First Communion, boys spend less time with their mothers and come to take on small jobs which throw them more and more into contact with their older brothers, their fathers, and other men of the island. By the time young adolescents pass Confirmation and leave school, at the time of puberty, they are able to perform most adult economic tasks, and their labor is of utmost importance to the family.

Among the major jobs performed by women outside of the household round, and these by only a few younger women, are cleaning fish, carrying seaweed, planting potatoes, haying, growing vegetables, feeding and milking cattle, and caring for poultry. They also knit, crochet, ready wool for weaving, and tailor clothes for themselves and their families, as well as make sweaters, belts, and shawls for sale. In the several homes which accommodate tourists during the summer months, most of the responsibilities for their care fall on the women of the household. Men also do the tasks associated with fishing, farming, and the care of large livestock just listed, and they participate in the job of thickening wool; all of the other subsistence and income activities are exclusively male ones.

In the past, when fishing was a more practiced and laborious occupation than it is now, women not only aided men gut and cure fish, but they baited lines and did other affiliated chores as well. They also participated to a greater degree than today in collecting seaweed and in planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops of all varieties. Their involvement in the economic life of the island often demanded that they transport heavy loads manually for long distances, especially when they cared for all of the needs of both large and small livestock and aided in kelp-making. It is not difficult to comprehend why women are mystified at the complaints of their single daughters about the hardships that young married women must endure.

Most folk admit that members of the present generation work less strenuously than did those of two generations ago, when harsh landlords rather than a benevolent government intruded so importantly into their lives. There is in Inis Beag a widespread feeling of guilt among men, seldom expressed openly, about being "lazy." It is my observation that island men, on the whole, put in fewer hours of labor and expend less energy than workers in a typical industrial plant in America. Inis Beag emigrants who return from England for visits invariably

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

fork. It is not unusual for a man to eat six or eight large spuds at a sitting, and the pot used to boil potatoes for a large family is piled high indeed. Spuds also are fed to cattle, poultry, and pets. The diet of families which are most prosperous, keep tourists, or whose members are acculturated is more varied than the diet that I have just described, and these families utilize the shops more than is usual.

The excessive intake of carbohydrates, particularly by children, coupled with the almost complete absence of dental hygiene, has resulted in universal tooth decay among the folk. Many people in their twenties and thirties already wear false teeth, and toothache is the most common physical ailment. My wife and I discovered but one adult who cleans her teeth, and she only once a week with a cloth and toothpaste. The islanders eschew use of the toothbrush for several reasons: some believe that bad teeth are inherited or decay is a contagious disease, and nothing can be done to prevent deterioration once it has set in; others equate decay with the common cold, a natural affliction suffered by everyone which must be accepted fatalistically (and masochistically); while still others regard the toothbrush as an English innovation or its use as an upper class affectation—"If I used one they would say I had fancy ideas."—to be shunned on these grounds. A story whose plot was laid in an island in the region of Inis Beag appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and was illustrated with photographs taken in Inis Thiar. The Dublin model who portrayed the heroine in local attire was recognized as an outsider by the folk who viewed the pictures because her teeth were white and even.

Clothing

The term traditional applied to the much publicized Inis Beag garb refers to the homespun vests and trousers and blue woolen shirts of the men, the ankle-length red and blue woolen skirts and a type of shawl of the women, and the cowskin shoes and woven belts worn by many men but only a few women. Some of these articles of wear are shared with peasants of the region, or were in the past and thus are vestigial; others are unique to Inis Beag; and all are in the process of being replaced by mass produced mainland attire. Of 111 adult males in Inis Beag, 11 have given up the local dress, as have 9 of the 85 adult females. Most of these 20 have returned to the island from having spent time on the mainland or abroad, and as a matter of prestige have chosen to retain the foreign costume. Practically all of the young men past school age who have not been away dress traditionally, but none of the women between ages 18 and 29 do; the youngest women who wear the red or blue skirt are of the latter age.

Although most clothing worn by the islanders is tailored locally, everything but the trousers and vests of the men are made from imported materials. Clothing is tailored from cloth woven by the island weaver from Inis Beag wool which is washed, dyed, and spun in the homes but carded on the mainland. The trousers are brown or grey depending on whether a brown or black weft is combined with the white warp on the loom; they are called "britches" when styled differently as to seam and hem. Vests also are brown or grey in front with backs dyed blue, and

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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are worn over dark colored sweaters or blue woolen pullover shirts. Most sweaters are imported, although some of simple design are knitted by women, and shirts are sewn from wool sold in the shops. Under the outer layer of clothing are worn lightweight grey woolen undershirts, known as "grey shirts," and heavier white woolen—"bawneen"—underpants, called "white drawers." The grey shirt is flannel, but the folk use that term to designate homespun wool. Sometimes a bawneen waistcoat is substituted for the vest, and in the heat of the summer may be worn directly over the undershirt. Making up the remainder of the male costume are the ubiquitous Irish visored cap, imported leather or locally manufactured belts and shoes, and stockings. One of the most time consuming chores of women is knitting and darning stockings for their husbands and children.

Just as the vest is the most striking item of male apparel, the red or blue skirt, or "petticoat," is the most striking female one, in particular the red petticoat when viewed from afar against the dull colors of sand and limestone. The skirt, made from imported wool but dyed locally, is gathered and styled with a deep tuck about nine inches from the bottom, and under this in winter is worn an additional bawneen or red skirt. Sometimes a cotton petticoat and knee length "knickers" also are worn, and several layers of cotton "vests" and shirts provide needed warmth beneath the cotton or lightweight woolen handmade blouse during winter. Blouses are styled alike with collars, long sleeves, and buttons down the front, and usually are of subdued plaid material purchased in the shops. However, somewhat unusual designs and colors are admired, as are brooches worn at the neck of the garment. Black knee length woolen stockings and black leather shoes, both procured in the shops, encase the feet. Over the shoulders may be worn a multi-colored or red island crocheted shawl of small size, called a "shawleen." In winter and when attending church, women wear heavy brown woolen paisley or black shawls outdoors which cover the head. The black shawl can be bought on the mainland, but the paisley shawl is no longer available.

Infants of both sexes until toilet trained are clothed in plain bawneen dresses. Then boys don short pants of varying length made from homespun wool, which are worn with white sweaters or blue shirts. Corduroy trousers and jackets are coming into vogue for everyday wear, but on Sunday the white sweater always is worn. Older boys wear long woolen trousers or britches and blue shirts, and children of all ages go barefooted or put on sandals during the summer and add hand knit stockings in winter. Girls past infancy wear frocks sewn by their mothers, bought in the shops, or sent by relatives from abroad. Whether shoes and stockings are worn depends on the weather, and girls don sweaters and coats over their dresses to afford them protection against the cold. Hairbows provide the only decoration.

Underclothing is changed once a week, and women try to wash clothes that often as well. A man has at least one old and one new vest, trousers, and shirt, and on Sunday and for special events he will wear his newest articles of clothing; the same can be said of women's petticoats and accouterments. Winter and summer attire remains the same for both sexes except that some underclothing is shed during the summer, and at night on retiring outer clothing is removed and some

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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underclothing retained. The latter practice reflects extreme modesty as well as the need for warmth. Islanders have an obsessive fear of nakedness which permits them, after infancy, to bathe only their feet, hands, and face and precludes bathing in the sea and the use of bathtubs.

Crafts

Of the several crafts practiced in Inis Beag, only three are strictly income instead of combined subsistence-income activities: the manufacture of *curach* by four men, the mass production of stockings by four girls in the factory at the coast guard station, and the fashioning of miniature canoes by a single man. Sweaters, woven belts, cowhide shoes, and the small multi-colored shawls are made both for local wear and for export. Most of the exported sweaters are sold to a particular mainland firm for resale, as are all of the model canoes, and the factory is sponsored by Gaeltacht Eireann which markets the stockings produced. Other craft commodities are sold by the folk directly to consumers, most of whom are tourists.

The long rowing canoe of Inis Beag is distributed widely along the west coast of Ireland, from Cos. Donegal to Kerry, and its seaworthy qualities as well as the rowing skill of the crews which sail it are renowned. One of a number of varieties of the coracle, which has a heritage extending back to the Mesolithic, it is built of deal and oak lathes and covered with tarred canvas (see Fig 10). Before canvas was introduced, untanned seal, cow, and horse hides were used for covering, and these were reported from a nearby island less than 100 years ago. The *curach* is approximately 20 feet in length, has a high pointed nose, is round bellied and lacks a keel, draws less than 6 inches of water, and is rowed with narrow 10-feet-long oars. These oars are bladeless for use in rough seas and are pivoted on single tholepins rather than in oarlocks. The looms of the oars overlap, so that oarsmen must pull cross-handed, and on long journeys a lug sail is hoisted to relieve the crew. For the neophyte, rowing a *curach* cross-handed in a heavy sea can be even more abusive of the hands than rebuilding a gateway in a stone fence. Most canoes hold three men—are "three-oared"—but two-, four-, and even five-men *curach* were or are used. Loads up to a ton and a half can be accommodated, and trussed asses, sheep, and horses sometimes are transported in them.

Forty-two householders in Inis Beag own three-men canoes, among whom three have additional two-oared *curach*. The craft are stored upside down in "cots" on either side of the strand along the margins of the common land, although Terrace villagers use a small beach along the northeast coast of the island; they are carried between the cots and the water upside down on the shoulders of the crew, and in that position resemble gigantic beetles. Two Inis Beag men are at work building canoes most of the time, and when they are not busy at this task they construct furniture for local sale. Two other men manufacture *curach* occasionally, and another two who once built them have discontinued the practice. No canoe makers are found elsewhere in the region; therefore, Inis Beag artisans serve the

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

The knit sweater called a "ganzie," is not a traditional item of wear, as is commonly asserted by writers, but was introduced in the 1890s as a cottage industry by the Congested Districts Board, which sent instructors to Inis Beag to teach the women there the manner of knitting the intricate patterns. Only children wear the ganzie, for men always have preferred a dark sweater of simple design which is indigenous to the island. The patterns bear such euphonious names as "crooked road," "figure eight," "double diamond," "rosebud," "honeycomb," and "blackberry," and most of them are common to the rest of Ireland, the British Isles, and other parts of Europe. The term ganzie, in fact, undoubtedly derives from the Channel island, Guernsey. A widely held belief that each Inis Beag family has its own distinctive sweater pattern, comparable to the Scottish tartan, by which its drowned members are identified is unfounded. Seventeen women knit for the mainland company, which supplies them with yarn, and are paid between 2 pounds and 2 pounds and 10 shillings by weight for each sweater. Some are able to knit a ganzie in a week, but others take two or three weeks; one woman made 41 sweaters during 1959. A girl working steadily at the knitting factory can earn slightly more in a week than one knitting a ganzie in that time, but most girls choose to knit sweaters because they can be at home where their task seems less tedious. Some women prefer to sell their sweaters to tourists and can on occasion dispose of a ganzie for as much as 6 pounds, but these women must purchase their own yarn, and marketing is much less secure as tourists seldom come into island homes. At present, the finest ganzies are knitted by women in Co. Donegal, a fact which Inis Beag women admit privately.

The woven belt and cowhide shoes of Inis Beag folk have an ancient heritage, just as has the *curach*. It is not known when the belt, or *crios*, was introduced into Ireland, but it has been worn for centuries by Portuguese seamen. Known as "pampooties," the island style footwear once was worn widely in Ireland, although made from various hides and skins, and a century ago was cut from sealskin in Inis Beag. The term pampootie is of Scandinavian origin, and my wife and I have heard it used among Danish peasants to describe their shoes. Today, a Danish expatriate who has lived in the island for almost a decade supports himself by weaving *crios* on a loom for the folk; he also sells them to visitors and to mainland shops along with woven ties and bookmarks. Although "the Dane" has come to monopolize the production of belts, several women occasionally make them by hand for their menfolk and to sell. The manufacture of *crios* once was largely in the hands of women, and they wore them sewn to their petticoats and tied at the side, but now it is mostly men who wear them. Three yards long and two inches wide, the belt is woven with a multitude of colors and designs and is worn wrapped twice around the body and tucked in at either side of the waist. Elders prefer traditional designs and shun the color green because it is unlucky, but young men are coming to like experimental patterns and all of the basic colors and their many shades. Contrary to popular opinion, there are no family designs. Some persons, however, ask for the same pattern every two or three years when they buy a new *crios* if they believe that it has brought them luck.

Pampooties are favored in Inis Beag because they are ideally suited for wet rocks and frail canoes. The spiked heels of female tourists and visiting emigrants who come ashore in *curach* are viewed with trepidation by crewmen, who are sup-

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ported on the sea only by thin canvas. Most men are able to make pampooties for themselves, but several islanders specialize in the craft and sell their wares to their fellows and to visitors. Usually cured hides are imported from the mainland, and 40 pairs of pampooties can be fashioned from a whole cowhide. They are cut to shape the foot, have the hair outside, are secured front and back by lacing, and when used daily will last about two months. To be pliable, they must be kept moist, so they are dipped in water when they become dry and hardened; however, because they are worn constantly in wet grass and sand, they seldom lose their softness.

In this chapter I have considered all of the important means of gaining a livelihood in Inis Beag. Some I have discussed at length, while others I have touched on briefly and will reconsider later; but two thus far not referred to—piloting and recovering objects washed ashore—I would like to take up before ending the chapter. Only one pilot remains in the island, but early in the century men of several families guided vessels through the east sound to ports on the mainland. Then it was customary to place lookouts at the high points of Inis Beag to scan the horizon for masts of approaching ships, and often several canoes would race miles out to sea in order to be first to contact a potential customer. The Terrace villager who still plies the trade seldom contacts likely vessels now, and more often than not his services are refused once he rows to a ship, what with modern charts and navigating instruments. Piloting is still very much alive in the memories of the folk, and one of the popular genres of folklore is the humorous anecdote dealing with real and imagined experiences of pilots. One of these concerns a crew fishing in the east sound which was hailed by the captain of a passing schooner. Although not a pilot, an old member of the crew claimed that he was and climbed aboard, and the captain agreed to hire him after he said that he knew the sound and coastline well. Soon after, the ship struck bottom "with a great bump," and the enraged captain shouted, "I thought you said you knew all the rocks in the sound.", to which the islandman replied in a quiet voice, "I did, and that's one of them." The same old man in another tale earns the job by boxing the compass in Gaelic for the captain; the humor of this story lies in the fact that the captain does not know Irish, and the islandman, who in turn does not know the points of the compass, simply recites terms of reference[2] for kin in a rhythmic manner.

One of the oldest of Inis Beag traditions is the "law of wrack"—the right of islanders to confiscate objects of value which have washed ashore. If a person discovers wrack, he establishes ownership by placing a stone atop it or by carrying it above high water mark, and no one else will claim it. Some islanders wander along the shores at dawn seeking what objects may have washed in during the night, especially timber, and those who habitually engage in this pursuit are known disparagingly as "wrack-boomers"—so poor that they must depend on salvage. During the two world wars, the economy of Inis Beag was bolstered by the immense amount of wreckage which drifted in from torpedoed ships, and the islanders still reminisce about particular visitations of flour, planks, and other

[2] See p. 75 for a definition of terms of reference.

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Celts. But local legend, historical evidence, and genealogical data collected by my wife and me indicate that the present population is descended from immigrants who came to the island from many parts of Ireland following the Cromwellian incursion of the seventeenth century. The islanders still express bitterness over conditions of poverty and servitude experienced by their ancestors during the 300 years that they lived under absentee Anglo-Irish landlords. All of the excesses of foreign domination suffered by mainland peasants were suffered by the inhabitants of Inis Beag, but were aggravated by the ordinary hardships of island living. Little was known about events in Inis Beag during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries until the island was visited by archeologists and publicized in their scientific writings. The surrounding area of the mainland was very much isolated and seldom visited at that time, although trading between Inis Beag and nearby communities was carried on, and passing ships sometimes called at the island.

Agricultural pursuits have always dominated the subsistence economy of Inis Beag. Most householders own land on which they grow potatoes and other vegetables, grass, and sometimes rye and sally rods and where they pasture cattle, sheep, goats, asses, and horses. The back of the island, behind the communities, is divided into four strips, and each landowner possesses numerous plots located along the "quarter" on which his village fronts. The average combined holding is sixteen acres, and almost 50 percent of the land is composed of arable indigenous and manufactured soils. Potatoes are the staple crop, and they are supplemented by various other vegetables, milk from cattle and goats, meat from island sheep, fish, eggs, and other foods, many of which are imported and sold in the shops. Rye is grown for thatching, and sally rods are used to weave several types of containers. Other subsistence activities (which also provide income for some folk) are knitting, weaving, crocheting, tailoring, and sandal making.

A slowly expanding cash economy features the export of cattle and sheep fattened on the island and of surplus potatoes and fish, the collection of seaweed for extraction of iodine at a mainland factory, the keeping of tourists in private homes, and the manufacturing of craft objects for sale to visitors and for export. At the turn of the century, fishing from canoes—with nets and lines often many miles out in the ocean—was an important subsistence and income activity. A few islanders who owned little or no land lived primarily by fishing and kelp-making. But over the past few decades, fish have become less plentiful and the weather more inclement, especially during winter